

BJC Wensa

“WENSA” MEANS “FUN” IN JUDEO-ARABIC!

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SHEMOT

SHABBAT ENDS 5:31 PM

Publisher: Anna Khabbaza Hakakian

PARSHA OF THE WEEK.... SHEMOT

The children of Israel multiply in Egypt. Threatened by their growing numbers, Pharaoh enslaves them and orders the Hebrew midwives, Shifrah and Puah, to kill all male babies at birth. When they do not comply, he commands his people to cast the Hebrew babies into the Nile.

A child is born to Yocheved, the daughter of Levi, and her husband, Amram, and placed in a basket on the river, while the baby's sister, Miriam, stands watch from afar. Pharaoh's daughter discovers the boy, raises him as her son, and names him Moses.

As a young man, Moses leaves the palace and discovers the hardship of his brethren. He sees an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, and kills the Egyptian. The next day he sees two Jews fighting; when he admonishes them, they reveal his deed of the previous day, and Moses is forced to flee to Midian. There he rescues Jethro's daughters, marries one of them (Tziporah), and becomes a shepherd of his father-in-law's flocks.

G-d appears to Moses in a burning bush at the foot of Mount Sinai, and instructs him to go to Pharaoh and demand: "Let My people go, so that they may serve Me." Moses' brother, Aaron, is appointed to serve as his spokesman. In Egypt, Moses and Aaron assemble the elders of Israel to tell them that the time of their redemption has come. The people believe; but Pharaoh refuses to let them go, and even intensifies the suffering of Israel. Moses returns to G-d to protest: "Why have You done evil to this people?" G-d promises that the redemption is close at hand.



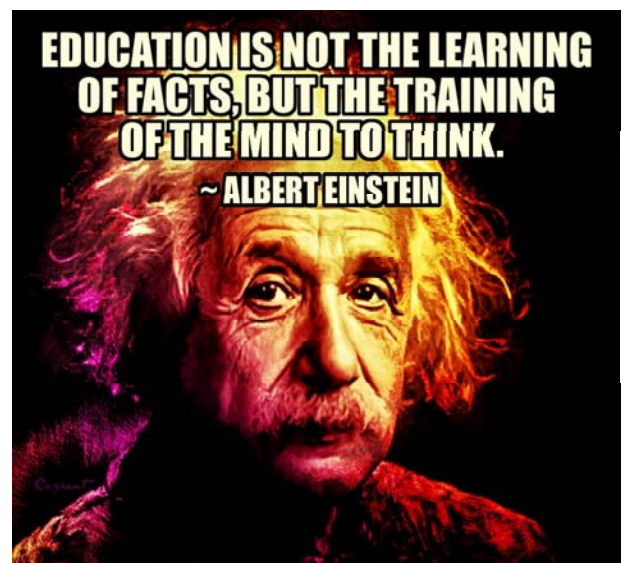
Helpful Handyman!

Contributed by Mirra Zara

JOKE

A man buys a fabulous home in Beverly Hills, California. He brings in a local workman to decorate the place. When the job is finished, the homeowner is delighted but realizes that he's forgotten to put mezuzahs on the doors. He goes out and buys 50 mezuzahs and instructs the decorator how to place them on the right hand side of each door except bathrooms and kitchens. He's really worried that the decorator will chip the paint work or won't put them up correctly. However, when he comes back a few hours later, he sees that the job has been carried out to his entire satisfaction.

He's so pleased that he gives the decorator a bonus. As the decorator is walking out of the door he says, "Glad you're happy with the job....By the way, I took out all the warranties in the little boxes and left them on the table for you!"



A letter to my dad

A father makes a huge impact on his daughter's life. From teaching me about the solar system and the black hole, to criticizing my drawing and art, you've showed me ways to always learn more, try to improve, and stand on my own two feet. With every math question I had, and science project you helped me with, I now smile and remember you when I see my children learn about these topics, knowing you would have loved to be there and discuss those exact subjects with them.

A dad's job is not only to protect his little girl, but also to show her how to stand up tall, one day, when he is not around. You taught me life lessons by example, most of the time not by using words to tell me, but let me see and realize through actions. Less words, are sometimes more powerful in leaving an impression. You exemplified that so well. I guess you can say you've never stopped teaching me in ways that come through memories and sometimes dreams even after you were gone. Only when one has time to reflect back, the realization of this impact is so evident.

The older I get Dad, the more I realize just how much you gave me. In fact, I don't even remember you buying a toy or giving me a wrapped gift to gain my love, yet, you gave so much more... You taught me how to be proud of myself, but, also how to be humble. You taught me to reach out to others when they are in need and to offer my hand in support. You imparted in me the importance of giving without expectations. In a world where we spoil our kids with "things" and "gifts" are expected and taken for granted, I look back and realize, how affection is built without any of that.

I learned from you how to pay attention to my creative side as well as my logic. You gave me the knowledge that to fail only means another door to a better opportunity has opened.

Three years have now passed. Thank you, Dad, for being the loving father and grandfather you were, for all you have given me, and making me feel so proud to call you my father. I will continue to miss you with all my heart and soul. Your legacy of wisdom, integrity and courage will go on forever.

*Dad is gone but not forgotten
And, as dawns another year
In lonely hours of thinking
Thoughts of him are always near.*

*Many think the wound is healed
But little do they know
of the sorrow
That lies in the heart concealed.*

*His charming ways and smiling face,
Are a pleasure to recall
He had a kindly word for each
And died beloved to all.*

Your daughter
(aka Anna!)

Those we love don't go away.
They walk besides us day by day.
Unseen, unheard, but always near.
Still loved, still missed,
and forever dear.

Please join us at The BJC Shabbat services
for the three year memorial of
Dr. Albert Khabbaza
Saturday, Jan. 10, 2015

JOKE

What do you drink?

Contributed by Isaac Amnon



"For better digestion I drink beer,
in the case of appetite loss, I drink white wine,
in the case of low blood pressure, I drink red wine,
in the case of high blood pressure, I drink scotch,
and when I have a cold, I drink schnapps."

"When do you drink water?"

"I've never been that sick!"
NOT A GOOD ADVICE!



This Family Shabbat is sponsored by Yvonne Khabbaza in memory of her late husband Dr. Albert Khabbaza.

Beautiful Jewish Story

This true story, submitted by Nechama Goodman, is documented in "Monsey, Kiryat Sefer and Beyond" by Zev Roth.

Contributed by Jaqueline Cohen

On his way out from shul in Jerusalem, Dan approached a young man in jeans, backpack, dark skin, curly black hair, he looked Sephardi, maybe Moroccan. "Good Shabbos. My name is Dan Eisenblatt. Would you like to eat at my house tonight?" The young man's face broke in an instant from a worried look to a smile. "Yeah, thanks. My name is Machi." Together they walked out of the shul. A few minutes later they were all standing around Dan's Shabbos table. Dan noticed his guest fidgeting and leafing through his songbook, apparently looking for something. He asked with a smile, "Is there a song you want to sing?"

"I can help if you're not sure about the tune." The guest's face lit up. "There is a song I'd like to sing, but I can't find it here. I really liked what we sang in the synagogue tonight. What was it called? Something 'dodi.'" Dan paused for a moment, on the verge of saying, "It's not usually sung at the table," but then he caught himself. "If that's what the kid wants," he thought, "what's the harm?" Aloud he said, "You mean Lecha Dodi. Wait, let me get you a siddur."

Once they had sung Lecha Dodi, the young man resumed his silence until after the soup, when Dan asked him, "Which song now?" The guest looked embarrassed, but after a bit of encouragement said firmly, "I'd really like to sing Lecha Dodi again." Dan was not really all that surprised when, after the chicken, he asked his guest what song now, and the young man said, "Lecha Dodi, please." Dan almost blurted out, "Let's sing it a little softer this time, the neighbors are going to think I'm nuts." He finally said, "Don't you want to sing something else?" His guest blushed and looked down. "I just really like that one," he mumbled. "Just something about it - I really like it." In all, they must have sung "The Song" eight or nine times. Dan wasn't sure -- he lost count.

Later Dan asked, "Where are you from?" The boy looked pained, then stared down at the floor and said softly, "Ramallah." Dan was sure he'd heard the boy say "Ramallah," a large Arab city on the West Bank. Quickly he caught himself, and then realized that he must have said Ramleh, an Israeli city. Dan said, "Oh, I have a cousin there. Do you know Ephraim Warner? He lives on Herzl Street..."

The young man shook his head sadly. "There are no Jews in Ramallah." Dan gasped. He really had said "Ramallah"! His thoughts were racing. Did he just spend Shabbos with an Arab? He told the boy, "I'm sorry, I'm a bit confused. And now that I think of it, I haven't even asked your full name. What is it, please?" The boy looked nervous for a moment, then squared his shoulders and said quietly, "Machmud Ibn-esh-Sharif."

Dan stood there speechless. What could he say? Machmud broke the silence hesitantly: "I was born and grew up in Ramallah. I was taught to hate my Jewish oppressors, and to think about killing them would make me a hero.

But I always had my doubts. I mean, we were taught that the Sunna, the tradition, says, 'No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself.' I used to sit and wonder, weren't the Yahud (Jews) people, too? Didn't they have the right to live the same as us? If we're supposed to be good to everyone, how come nobody includes Jews in that?

"I put these questions to my father, and he threw me out of the house. By now my mind was made up: I was going to run away and live with the Yahud, until I could find out what they were really like.

I snuck back into the house that night, to get my things and my backpack. My mother caught me in the middle of packing. I told her that I wanted to go live with the Jews for a while and find out what they are really like and maybe I would even want to convert. She was turning more and more pale while I said all this, and I thought she was angry, but that wasn't it.

Something else was hurting her and she whispered gently, 'You don't have to convert. You already are a Jew.' "I was shocked. My head started spinning, and for a moment I couldn't speak. Then I stammered, 'What do you mean?' 'In Judaism,' she told me, 'the religion goes according to the mother. I'm Jewish, so that means you're Jewish.' "I never had any idea my mother was Jewish. I guess she didn't want anyone to know. She whispered suddenly, 'I made a mistake by marrying an Arab man. In you, my mistake will be redeemed.' "My mother always talked that way, poetic-like. She went and dug out some old documents, and handed them to me: things like my birth certificate and her old Israeli ID card, so I could prove I was a Jew. I've got them here, but I don't know what to do with them.

"My mother hesitated about one piece of paper. Then she said, 'You may as well take this. It is an old photograph of my grand-parents which was taken when they went visiting the grave of some great ancestor of ours.' "Now I have traveled here to Israel. I'm just trying to find out where I belong."

Dan gently put his hand on Machmud's shoulder. Machmud looked up, scared and hopeful at the same time. Dan asked, "Do you have the photo here?" The boy's face lit up. "Sure! I always carry it with me." He reached in his backpack and pulled out an old, tattered envelope. When Dan read the gravestone inscription, he nearly dropped the photo. He rubbed his eyes to make sure. There was no doubt.

This was a grave in the old cemetery in Tzfat, and the inscription identified it as the grave of the great Kabbalist and tzaddik Rabbi Shlomo Alkabetz. Dan's voice quivered with excitement as he explained to Machmud who his ancestor was. "He was a friend of the Arizal, a great Torah scholar, a tzaddik, a mystic. And, Machmud, your ancestor wrote that song we were singing all Shabbos: Lecha Dodi!" This time it was Machmud's turn to be struck speechless. Dan extended his trembling hand and said, "Welcome home, Machmud."

This true story, submitted by Nechama Goodman, is documented in "Monsey, Kiryat Sefer and Beyond" by Zev Roth.

It is unbelievable...



ROWING TEAM

Yeshiva University decided to field a rowing team. Unfortunately, they lose race after race. Even though they practice and practice for hours every day, they never manage to come in any better than dead last.

Finally, the team decides to send Morris Fishbein, its captain, to spy on Harvard, the perennial championship team. So Morris schlepps off to Cambridge, Mass., and hides in the bushes next to the Charles River, where he carefully watches the Harvard team at its daily practice. After a week, Morris returns to Yeshiva. "Well, I figured out their secret," he announces. "What? Tell us! Tell us!" his teammates shout.

"We should have only one guy yelling. The other eight should row."

J d v h r g ! J n j d r



contributed by Mirra Zara

A woman goes to the post office to buy stamps for her Chanukah cards. She says to the clerk "May I have 50 Chanukah stamps please."

"What denomination?" says the clerk. The woman says "Oy vey ... my God, has it come to this? Okay, give me six orthodox, twelve conservative and thirty-two reform!"

During a service at an old synagogue in Eastern Europe, when the Shema prayer was said, half the congregants stood up and half remained sitting. The half that was seated started yelling at those standing to sit down, and the ones standing yelled at the ones sitting to stand up.

The rabbi, though learned as he was in the Law and commentaries, didn't know what to do. His congregation suggested that he consult a housebound 98-year-old man who was one of the original founders of their temple.

The rabbi hoped the elderly man would be able to tell him what the actual temple tradition was, so he went to the nursing home with a representative of each faction of the congregation. The one whose followers stood during Shema said to the old man, "Is it the tradition to stand during this prayer?"

The old man answered, "No, that is not the tradition."

The one whose followers sat, said, "Then it must be the tradition to sit during Shema!"

The old man answered, "No, that is not the tradition."

Then the rabbi said to the old man, "But the members of the congregation fight all the time, yelling at each other about whether they should sit or stand."

The old man interrupted, exclaiming, "THAT is the tradition!"

P d n | r u f d g d s



- d n y f d g d g v d n d l "Inta Omri" d g g "Shema Israel"
 d g h h q Y q r Y r G h R N v i n g \$
 ; r q L u d y k o l M r q v Y r r x u M r q r u h h b c N d c d o b a M d a n

Doctor Bloom, who was known for miraculous cures for arthritis, had a waiting-room full of people when a little old lady, completely bent over in half, shuffled in slowly, leaning on her cane. When her turn came, she went into the doctor's office, and emerged within half an hour walking completely erect, with her head held high.

A woman in the waiting room who had seen all this walked up to the little old lady and said, "It's a miracle! You walked in bent in half and now you're walking erect. What did that doctor do?" She answered, "Miracle, shmira. . . he gave me a longer cane."

PHILANTHROPY

A visitor to Israel attended a recital and concert at the Moscovitz Auditorium. He was quite impressed with the architecture and the acoustics. He inquired of the tour guide, "Is this magnificent auditorium named after Chaim Moscovitz, the famous Talmudic scholar?"

"No," replied the guide. "It is named after Sam Moscovitz, the writer."

"Never heard of him," said the visitor. "What did he write?"

"A check," replied the guide.

Two Texans are sitting on a plane from Dallas and an old Jewish man is sitting between them. The first Texan says, "My name is Roger. I own 250,000 acres. I have 1,000 head of cattle and they call my place The Jolly Roger."

The second Texan says, "My name is John. I own 350,000 acres. I have 5,000 head of cattle and they call my place Big John's."

They both look down at the little old Jewish man who says, "My name is Irving and I own only 300 acres." Roger looks down at him and says, "300 Acres? What do you raise?"

"Nothing," says Irving .

"Well then, what do you call it?" asked John.

"Downtown Dallas ."

There are two ways of spreading light:
 to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.

—Edith Wharton

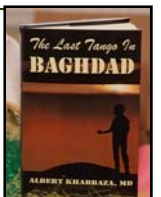
Nothing is impossible, the word itself says 'I'm possible'!

—Audrey Hepburn

The Last Tango in Baghdad

by Dr. Albert Khabbaza is available at all online booksellers. For more info visit:

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